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though partial embodiments and therefore from one point of view ridiculous, are yet necessary embodiments, so far as they go, of what is best to be desired. But none the less Falstaff's is a mind that has "received from Shakespeare's own the inexplicable touch of infinity which he bestowed on Hamlet and Macbeth and Cleopatra, but denied to Henry the Fifth" (p. 273). The whole relation between the erring Falstaff and the virtuous Henry is set out with wonderful fairness and penetration. It is very refreshing to come on such an unmasking of the elements of hardness and policy in the character of the man who "*always* succeeded," and who has even succeeded in making certain readers take him for Shakespeare's ideal hero, as perhaps Shakespeare himself, with a rueful smile, guessed they would be sure to do. And it is very refreshing in a book so instinct with noble ethical feeling to find such a whole-hearted sympathy with the Falstaffian point of view.

It is not for nothing that Mr. Bradley has studied for so long the most sympathetic of all geniuses; his affinity to Shakespeare's spirit emerges not only in his convincing study of "Shakespeare the Man," but in his own union of moral earnestness with freedom from moral pedantry, his power of entering as he enters into the most varied types: the soul of Keats and the soul of Shelley, the soul of Cleopatra and the soul of Hamlet.

F. MELIAN STAWELL.

London.

VOLTAIRE PHILOSOPHE. By Georges Pellissier. Paris: Armand Colin, 1908. Pp. iii, 304.

When M. Pellissier sums up his study of Voltaire by saying that that name symbolizes the work of the eighteenth century in the enfranchisement of human reason, and that therefore Voltaire is, even more than Rousseau, *the* great philosopher of his age, we must protest that the word "philosopher" is being used in a very inexact and popular sense. To be a great philosopher it is necessary that a man should, by reasoning about philosophical subjects, either make discoveries in them himself or enable others to do so; and that Voltaire achieved nothing of this kind the present essay most amply and candidly shows.

We have but to look under any of the four heads into which it is divided—Metaphysics and Physics, Religion, Ethics, and Politics—to see how remote he was from the proper philosophical spirit in every department. A brilliant abbreviator and popularizer and a still more brilliant controversialist, his weapons were wit and common sense rather than any passion for truth; and indeed in the joy of battle, what room is left for consistency? Take, for example, his treatment of religion. He held the common view of his time that God must exist because a supreme cause is necessary for the explanation of the universe. But he did not believe in a God who rewards and punishes, nor in the immortality of the soul, nor in the freedom of the will. Sharing, however, as he did, the current dread of atheism, he constantly recommended all these beliefs as essential to the well-being of society. *Si Dieu n'existait pas, il faudrait l'inventer*. Yet in the "Traité de Métaphysique" (which was not written for publication) he argued that good conduct was quite possible without these beliefs. A curious spectacle this, of the apostle of reason preaching, on the ground that they are useful, beliefs which he thinks are false, and which, as it turns out, he does not even believe to be useful. The fact, of course, is that he never grappled seriously with any philosophical problem, but oscillated between various points of view according to the state of his emotions and the exigencies of controversy.

M. Pellisier's book has the merit of being full of long quotations from Voltaire which are excellent reading; but it would be better if it were less of a tabulation of doctrines generally recognized to be shallow, unoriginal, and inconsistent, and more of a psychological study. What is wanted is some picture of the extraordinary combination of qualities which gave Voltaire a more imposing place in history than his greater genius and sincerity could give, for instance, to Pascal. That picture would show us the man of the world, shrewd and versatile, with an equal abundance of talent whether in money affairs or in philosophy, capturing the love of the people as much by his gibes as by his generousities and enthusiasms and crusades against oppression,—his very defects of meanness and vanity helping his success by stamping him of the common mold. For the description of human character is always interesting, particularly when we have to do with one that makes a great figure in his-

tory, and still more so when it combines the most entertaining opposites. The prophet of the French Revolution, who rejoiced in the decay of tyranny, yet toadied Frederick the Great and endured the unsavory entanglements of the court of Berlin; who hated the *canaille* and was smothered in roses by the mob of Paris; who spent most of his life in preaching *écrasez l'infâme* and always (so he said) had a fever on St. Bartholomew's Day, yet who went regularly to mass at Ferney and put up a gallows on his land to show that he was *seigneur*: here is a subject still awaiting final delineation by a brush that should be more subtle and painstaking, but should not be less vigorous than that of Carlyle.

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THE MEANING OF TRUTH: A SEQUEL TO "PRAGMATISM." By William James. London, Bombay and Calcutta: Longmans, Green & Co., 1909. Pp. xxii, 298.

This volume is in large measure a reprint, with minor changes, of various articles which the author has published on the meaning of truth, and their dates range from 1884 to December 3, 1908. The only important new contributions are three papers on "Abstractionism," "Two English Critics," and "A Dialogue." I for one wish to thank Professor James for making it easier to get an all-round view of his position. I have for many years been endeavoring to ascertain Professor James's standpoint on the subject treated in this volume, and although I had read carefully everything that is here reprinted I confess that I was not able to get a satisfactory view of the position as a whole. Whether I have now attained to this achievement remains to be seen, but at least I am glad to acknowledge that what till now have seemed to me,—will Professor James pardon the confession?—random excursions into the field of the problem resulting in no consistent accomplishment, at last have shown that they have been conducted on a thoroughly systematic plan. The final outcome of the single engagements taken together is that the general commands a strategic position with his forces marshalled about him in a formidable array, and he cannot be ousted by those who decline to meet him on his own ground, that of